

Washington State Scenic and Recreational Highways Strategic Plan



2010-2030



**Washington State
Department of Transportation**

Highways and Local Programs Division



Introduction by Secretary Paula Hammond



Governor Gregoire and I are pleased to present the Washington Scenic and Recreational Highways Plan, a new stand alone document and an element of Washington's Highway System Plan.

Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways are important access routes to our most scenic resources and best recreational destinations. This strategic plan ensures that we continue to preserve and enhance these spectacular and diverse landscapes.

Our plan, jointly developed with a long list of partners, supports world class traveler services connecting travelers with the history of Indian Tribes, the Columbia River, our agricultural and industrial communities, Washington's diverse landscapes, and more.

Please let us know if you have other ideas. You can reach me by e-mail at **hammonp@wsdot.wa.gov** or by telephone at (360) 705-7054.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Paula J. Hammond". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Paula J. Hammond, P.E.

Secretary of Transportation



Acknowledgements

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

What is the vision for Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways?

Washington residents and visitors value our scenic and recreational resources and want to ensure they are preserved for generations to come. Over the next 20 years, WSDOT, partner agencies, and organizations will work together to monitor, protect, and preserve at-risk resources, support economic vitality, and provide world class traveler services associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways through the implementation of this plan.

The sections of state highway addressed in this Plan offer an opportunity to maximize resources. For example, signage and kiosk improvements help to tell the rich tribal history of the state and support both tribal and local economic development and stewardship. In addition, these types of improvements help to connect travelers to the local history that is our shared heritage. Scenic and Recreational Highways have been identified over time as the most important access routes to the most scenic and best recreational resources in the State. Figure 1. of this Plan shows these sections of state highway. Figure 2. of this Plan shows nationally recognized byways. This strategic plan helps to identify opportunities for partnerships to ensure preservation and enhancement of these spectacular and diverse landscapes.

What is the purpose of the Strategic Plan?

This Plan establishes goals and performance measures consistent with the state's transportation policy goals (RCW 47.04.280), and

- Provides guidance to WSDOT programs
- Informs other planning efforts such as the Washington Transportation Plan
- Increases awareness of the value of the state scenic system
- Fulfills the need to include a Scenic and Recreational component to the Multi-Modal Transportation Plan as required by state law (RCW 47.06).

Citizens' comments played a major role in determining the Plan's direction

Public participation was instrumental in defining the goals and performance measures for the Scenic and Recreational Highways. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) sought input from citizens across the state, representing interest groups for specific Scenic and Recreational Highways, tribal, local, and regional agencies, and others throughout the development of the Plan and conducted eight public meetings around the state at key points in the process.



What are the goals for Scenic and Recreational Highways?

Performance measurement is a priority for the Governor and WSDOT. The Scenic and Recreational Highways are part of the state transportation system and all associated programs and efforts must be consistent with the Transportation Policy Goals described in state law (RCW 47.04.280).

This Plan establishes goals and performance measures for three of the State's transportation policy areas including:

- **Safety:** Increase traveler safety through traveler services on Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways.
- **Mobility:** Enhance public access to scenic and recreational resources associated with the State's Scenic and Recreational Highways.
- **Environment:** Plan for, protect and preserve resources associated with the State's Scenic and Recreational Highways.

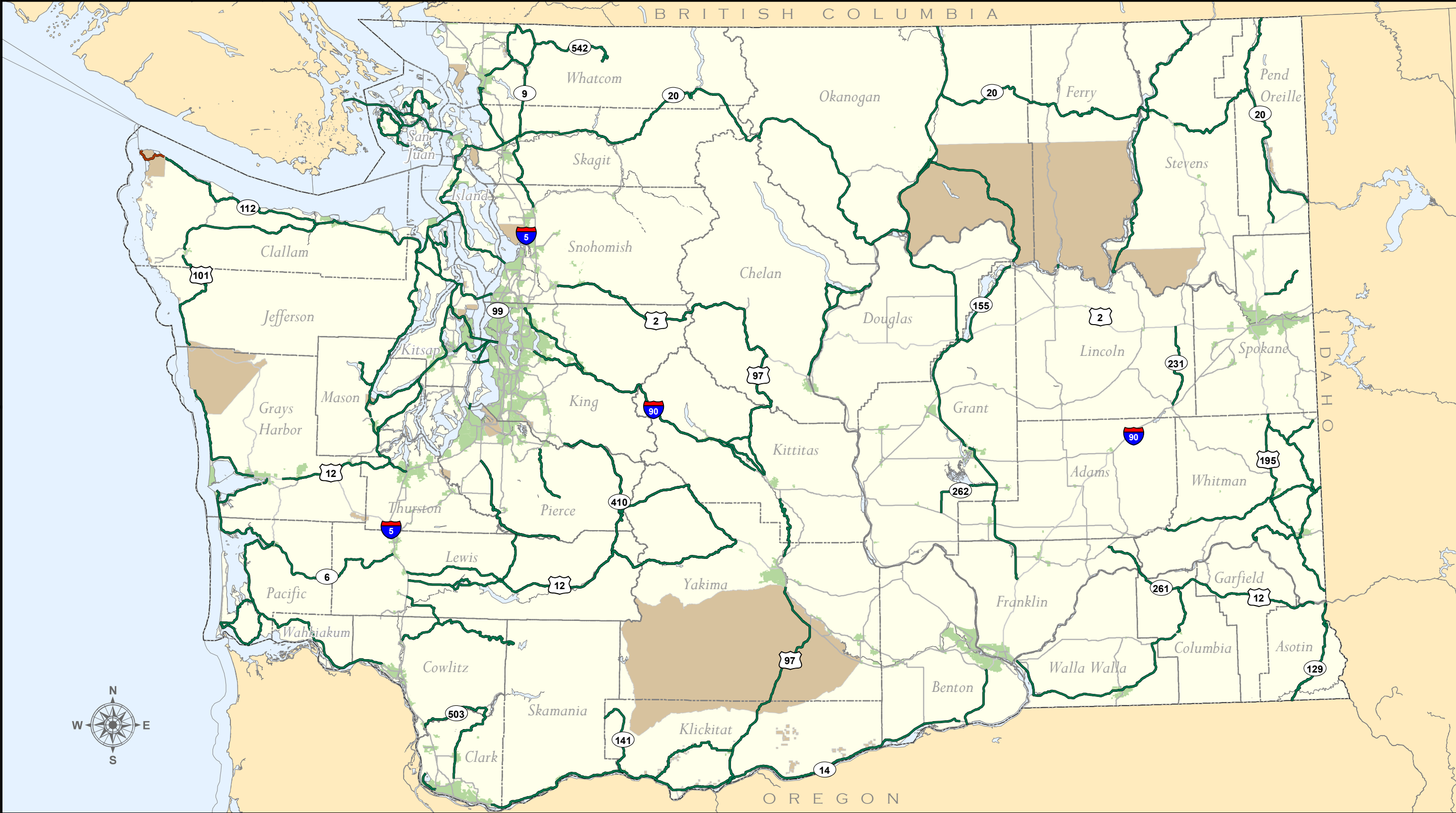
The Plan identifies statewide needs

Unfunded statewide projects that support the goals for Scenic and Recreational Highways have been identified and listed in Appendix C of WSDOT's Background Paper #2: Goals and Performance Measures¹. The purpose for developing this project list was to raise awareness of planning level projects being developed across the state, identify overlaps and opportunities for partnership, and establish a benchmark. The list is not intended to be all inclusive and is not prioritized.

¹ All Background Papers, related Appendices, and supporting documents referenced in the Plan can be found at WSDOT's website: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/ScenicByways/BywaysPlan.htm>



Figure 1. Washington State's Scenic and Recreational Highways



0 15 30 60 Miles



Washington State
Department of Transportation



Tribal Lands*



City Limits



Scenic and Recreational Highways (Per RCW 47.39 and 47.42)



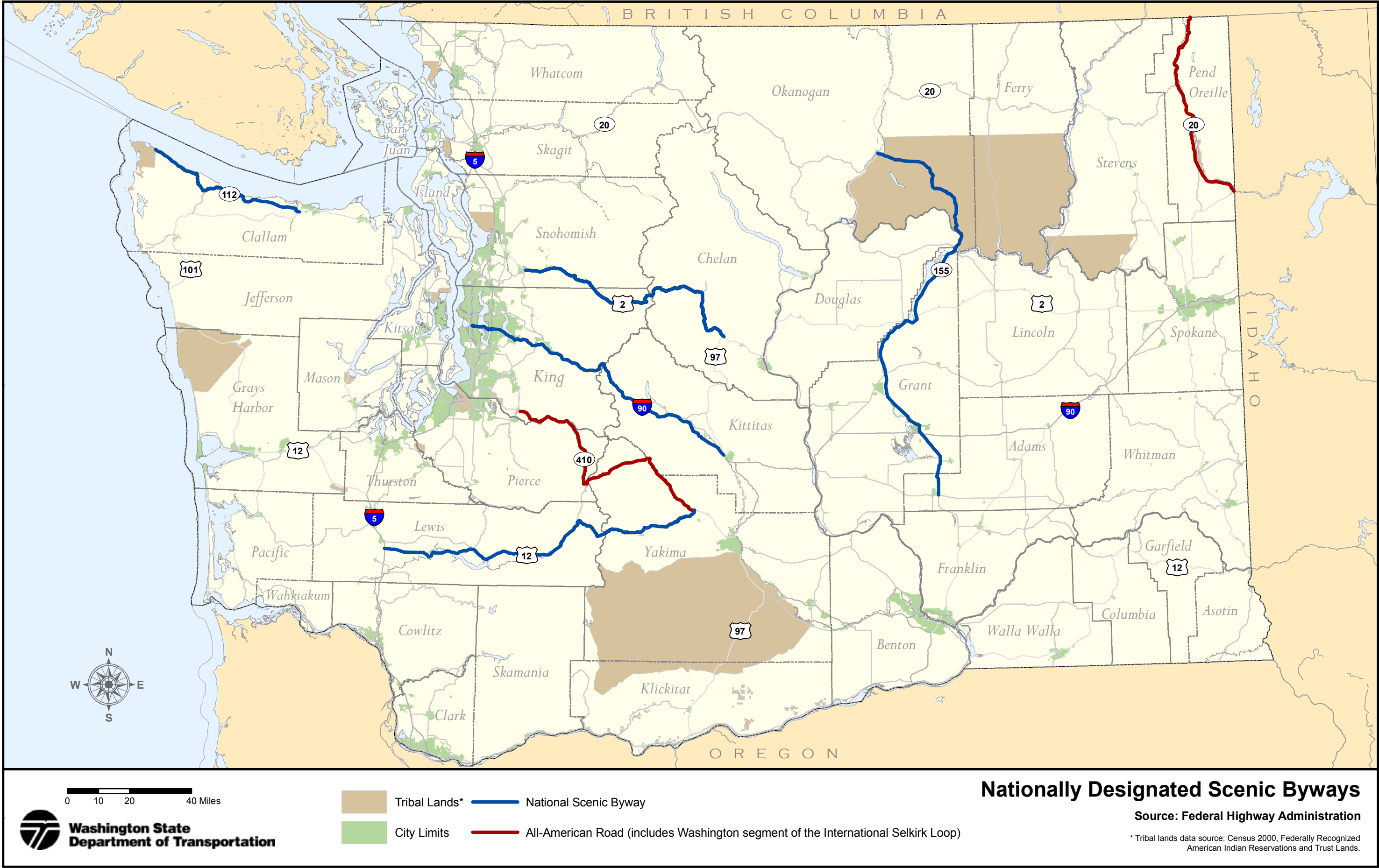
Indian Tribe Byways (Not in state law)

Scenic and Recreational Highways
Indian Tribe Byways

Source: Revised Code of Washington 47.39 and 47.42

* Tribal lands data source: Census 2000, Federally Recognized American Indian Reservations and Trust Lands.

Figure 2. Nationally Designated Scenic Byways



SECTION I. INTRODUCTION

Washington residents and visitors value scenic and recreational resources

This Plan process confirmed that Washington residents and visitors value our scenic and recreational resources and want to ensure they are preserved for generations to come.

Approximately 4,000 miles of the more than 7,000-mile state highway system make up Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways - some of the most breathtaking scenery and recreational opportunities in the entire country. See Figure 1. of this Plan for a map. This part of the larger state highway system, called Scenic and Recreational Highways, was originally identified through several "visual assessments" or corridor review processes conducted between 1960 and 1990. Over time, the state legislature has added new segments of state highway; most recently the Washington State Ferry system and section of I-5 in Skagit County.

Scenic and recreational highways are the primary access routes to the most scenic and best recreational resources within the state. This Plan for Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways helps to identify opportunities for partnerships to preserve and enhance these spectacular and diverse landscapes.

What is included in the Plan?

Consistent with federal and state planning requirements, the purpose is to develop a plan and implementation strategy for Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways to ensure stewardship of the state's most spectacular and diverse landscapes.

The state law (RCW 47.06.050) calls for the Scenic and Recreational Highways Plan, an element of the Statewide

Multi-modal Transportation Plan, to identify and recommend:

- Strategies for enhancing access to resources associated with scenic byways,
- Strategies for protecting, preserving, and enhancing these resources, and
- Designation of scenic and recreational highways.



Who was involved in developing this Plan?

WSDOT worked together with a broad steering committee representing 18 agencies and organizations to develop the State Scenic and Recreational Highways Plan. The steering committee included participation from a state, tribal, local, and regional agencies and organizations.

WSDOT recognizes that it will take the efforts of all these partner agencies and organizations to meet the transportation policy goals associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways. To ensure the goals are grounded in reality, WSDOT also sought public comments throughout the plan development process.

Citizens' comments played a major role in determining the Plan's direction

Public participation was instrumental in developing the goals and performance measures for the state's Scenic and Recreational Highways. WSDOT sought input through eight public meetings, including a series of public hearings held across the state at key points in development of the Plan.

WSDOT developed two background papers and related reports with public input and posted them to the WSDOT Scenic and Recreational Highways webpage for public comment. Each of these reports was made available for public review and each was discussed by the steering committee and WSDOT staff before being finalized. Throughout the nine-month plan development process, public comments were accepted via the website, e-mail, phone, and in letter form. In addition, a "list serve," or electronic discussion tool, was created for discussion and information sharing. WSDOT also hosted a series of public hearings across the state.



What federal and state goals and policies influenced the Plan?

How is the Plan organized?

The plan is organized in four Sections:

Section I: Introduction: Background information on the Plan, as well as a summary of requirements.

Section II: Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways Today: Summary of the status of the current system and a discussion of existing policies and partnerships.

Section III: Recommendations to Improve Scenic and Recreational Highways in Washington: Recommended goals, performance measures, and program focus.

Section IV: Implementation of the Plan: Ideas and guidance on how to implement the recommendations of the previous chapter

The Plan also includes reference to the two background reports.

Performance measurement is a priority for the Governor and Washington State Department of Transportation. The Scenic and Recreational Highways are part of the state transportation system and all associated programs and efforts must be consistent with the policy goals described in state law (RCW 47.04.280):

- (a) Preservation: To maintain, preserve, and extend the life and utility of prior investments in transportation systems and services;
- (b) Safety: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system;
- (c) Mobility: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State;
- (d) Environment: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment; and
- (e) effectiveness, and efficiency of the transportation system.

These policy goals are the basis for establishing detailed and measurable objectives and related performance measures.

Additionally, Washington's Transportation Plan calls for performance measures:

“Improved accountability is essential. Local, regional, and state transportation providers must base infrastructure investments on performance measurement and performance-based decision making to ensure the right projects are delivered when needed, and to maintain the public’s confidence in government’s ability to meet their needs.”

Regular monitoring and evaluation of these performance measures helps ensure that Scenic and Recreational Highways are better integrated into daily state agency operations. Benchmarking and performance measures also help document improvements throughout the state, providing data that can be used to describe progress toward the goals to the legislature and the general public.

Federal policy and guidance supports state’s efforts to plan and develop priorities for scenic and recreational highways and byways.

Title 23, Sec. 162 USC is primarily focused on federal administration of the National Scenic Byways discretionary grant program, but does not preclude strategic planning by states or development of more focused state strategies for implementing federal program. The National Scenic Byways discretionary grant program, administered by Federal Highway Administration, provides funding for byway-related projects each year that helps Washington State meet its transportation policy goals.

States are also encouraged to designate these routes before they are considered by FHWA for designation as National Scenic Byways or All-American roads - which indicates a level of planning is necessary by the state. Both the US Code and Federal Highway Administration’s (FHWA) 1995 Interim Policy support state strategic planning and identifies the role of states to include, “assuring that the intrinsic qualities of the National Scenic Byways and All-American Roads are being properly maintained in accordance with the corridor management plan”.



State, federal, and other funding sources also help Washington to meet its transportation policy goals as they relate to Scenic and Recreational Highways. These funding sources have included:

- Federal Transportation Enhancement Grants,
- Federal Forest Lands Grants,
- Indian Reservation Roads Funds, and
- State motor fuel tax.



SECTION II. WASHINGTON'S SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL HIGHWAYS TODAY

Why do we have a Scenic and Recreational System of Highways?

In 1990, the state legislature amended the 1967 State Scenic and Recreational Highway Act and found,

“Scenic and recreational highways are designated because of a need to develop management plans that will protect and preserve the scenic and recreational resources from loss through inappropriate development. Protection of scenic and recreational resources includes managing land use outside normal highway rights-of-way. The legislature recognizes that scenic and recreational highways are typically located in areas that are natural in character, along watercourses, or through mountainous areas, or in areas with a view of such scenery.” [1990 c 240].

This legislative finding gives insight into reasons and priorities for Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highway System. Additionally, the State Scenic and Recreational Highways Act calls out several funding priorities including funding further development of the state's program, signage, and bicycle and pedestrian connections.

What steps have been taken to meet requirements in state law?

In 1967, the state legislature enacted the State Scenic and Recreational Highway Act (referred to here as the Act) which established guidance for developing designation and maintenance criteria for Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highway System. The Act also calls for

planning, design standards, and legislative approval of additions to the State's Scenic System.

As part of the Act, the state legislature provided that motor vehicle funds from the state highway construction budget may be used, if available, for specific elements including:

- Right of way acquisition
- Highway or roadway construction
- Access to scenic observation points
- Safety rest areas
- Highway landscaping
- Signs and markers

WSDOT has constructed a number of projects totaling over \$9 million in state funds from 1992 to 2008 that directly support the Scenic and Recreational Highway System.

Who are the partners supporting Scenic and Recreational Highways?

WSDOT coordinates with a number of partner agencies and organizations. Representatives from each have participated in shaping the goals, performance measures, and strategies for improving Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways.

Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

WSDOT's role in Scenic and Recreational Highways is focused on managing the state's highways and includes working with partners to plan for and develop the system. WSDOT also provides technical assistance and helps develop funding partnerships.

US Forest Service

The US Forest Service (USFS) has been an active and ongoing partner at the national, state and community levels, as well as through the management of its own National Forest Scenic Byway program. Here in Washington, individual national forests connect with close to one-third of the designated Scenic and Recreation Highways. In a few cases, such as Sherman Pass and Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, USFS serves as the route's primary contact. Also, through the FHWA-funded Forest Highway Program, the agency has contributed about \$1 million per year over the last decade to highway enhancement projects, most connected with the Scenic and Recreation Highways. WSDOT will continue to work with the Forest Service to maintain and strengthen this important partnership.

Washington State Parks

Washington State Parks has been an important partner in developing the State's Scenic and Recreational Highway System. They have also participated in the Heritage Caucus held to discuss important historic preservation and other related issues during state legislative sessions. These agencies are also consulted when segments of state highway are being considered for designation as part of the State's Scenic and Recreational Highway System.

WSDOT will strengthen partnerships with State Parks by working closely with them to develop guidance and review and improve program criteria among other projects associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways.

National Park Service

The National Park Service, a bureau of the U.S. Department of the Interior, manages parks and visitor centers throughout Washington. They also help administer dozens of affiliated sites and locations including: National Register of Historic Places, National Heritage Areas, National Wild and Scenic Rivers, National Historic Landmarks, and National Trails.

WSDOT will also work to strengthen partnerships with the National Park Services by working closely with them review and improve program criteria among other projects associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways.

Washington State Department of Commerce

Within the Department of Commerce, there are several

offices that play important roles. The State Tourism Office has been a primary partner to date and has developed a number of marketing and promotional efforts associated with Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways including:

- Providing education and training opportunities for byway interest groups.
- Developing websites, guides, and publications.
- Producing advertizing campaigns.
- Marketing a number of the State Scenic and Recreational Highways.

In addition to continued collaboration with the State Tourism Office, two other offices within the Department of Commerce, Washington's Mainstreets Program and Washington's Office of Growth Management, have roles to play in planning, stewardship, and tourism for our State's Scenic and Recreational Highways.

Washington State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation

The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) is Washington State's primary agency with knowledge and expertise in preserving Washington's historic and cultural resources – significant buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts – as assets for the future. Historic preservation in some communities is recognized as an economic development opportunity. DAHP has helped to identify and provide technical assistance support for a number of projects on or near the State's Scenic and Recreational Highway system that in some cases, acquired National Scenic Byway grant funding.

WSDOT will continue the existing partnership and work to increase coordination with DAHP related to stewardship, planning, and tourism associated with the scenic system.

Washington State Department of Natural Resources

The Department of Natural Resources, the stewards of public land in Washington State, provide important information on rare species and biologically sensitive areas for governments to consider when developing land use and transportation plans. This information was used along with information associated with historic and cultural resources, parks, reserves, and forests to aid in the development of performance measures contained in

this Plan.

WSDOT will develop a stronger working relationship with Department of Natural Resources to help define strategies for protecting and preserving resources associated with the scenic system.

Tribal Governments

Tribal governments in Washington have been leaders in stewardship, planning, and tourism related to the State's Scenic and Recreational Highways. They offer important resources that help to inform transportation plans and projects including, but not limited to: natural resource departments, historical information and tribal historians that often have information that may not be available through state, regional or local sources, cultural resources and data, and tribal planners.

Several tribal governments participate in byway groups or serve as byway leaders for segments of the Scenic and Recreational Highway system and have developed a number of successful projects and improvements. Also, through tribal planning efforts and commitment of Indian Reservation Roads funds, improvement projects related to the Scenic and Recreational Highways have been identified and implemented consistent with tribal laws, plans and policies, and land use ordinances.

Through the WSDOT Secretary's Executive Order 1025.01 on Tribal Consultation, WSDOT is committed to government-to-government consultation with tribes on identified rights and interests. WSDOT will continue to provide technical assistance and increase coordination with tribal governments.

Regional Transportation Planning Organizations

In Washington, Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) include cities, counties, WSDOT, tribes, transit agencies, ports, and private employers in their membership. In summary, RTPOs are required by state and federal law to:

- Prepare a regional transportation plan.
- Certify that countywide planning policies and the transportation element of comprehensive plans are consistent with the regional transportation plan.
- Develop and maintain a six-year regional transportation improvement program.

Most RTPOs do not currently consider Scenic and Recreational Highways in their transportation plans. WSDOT will work to provide information and technical assistance to help RTPOs incorporate discussion of these

needs in their planning process.

Local Agencies

The 281 cities and towns and 39 counties, most of which conduct planning under Washington's Growth Management Act, are very important partners in preserving, protecting, and enhancing Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highway System. WSDOT will work with local agencies to improve coordination and integration of corridor management plans.

Local Byway Groups, Private and Non-Profit Partners

Local byway groups are key partners in Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways. Many of the byway leaders are volunteers from the local business community. In many cases, they lead corridor management planning and marketing efforts to promote portions of the Scenic and Recreational Highways recognized by FHWA as Scenic Byways or All-American Roads, as well as coordinating development of grant applications to the National Scenic Byway discretionary grant program. These groups may also serve as environmental advocates and active stewards. They may be involved in habitat restoration or trail building projects, or they may be involved in land use issues or land swaps.

WSDOT will continue to provide information and improve assistance to the public, private, and non-profit organizations, and look for opportunities to link them with other state and regional resources. WSDOT will support and encourage plan integration through formal and informal connections between corridor management planning and other required state, regional, and local planning processes.





SECTION III. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE SCENIC AND RECREATIONAL HIGHWAYS IN WASHINGTON

Establishing Statewide Goals and Performance Measures

Setting goals and collecting and evaluating performance data helps to gauge continued progress toward increasing stewardship, planning, tourism and traveler services for Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways.

The recommended performance measures or outcomes are an expansion of an existing process, to better enable Washington State to evaluate progress toward goals and objectives. As new performance measures are initiated, they should be regularly evaluated to determine if the measures are effective, or if modifications are needed.

There may also be opportunities to improve the performance measures in the future using new data. Changes to the census and other national, regional, tribal and local transportation surveys have the potential to increase the amount and quality of available information. This may change data collection significantly in the future, and would also necessitate periodic reevaluation of Washington's performance measures.

Existing goals and performance measures

Goals and performance measures related to Scenic and Recreational Highways have been established and are being tracked by a number of other federal, state, tribal, and local agencies.

WSDOT has avoided duplication of data collection and reporting by reviewing and summarizing the performance measures of complimentary programs.

Connecting to State Transportation Policy Goals

Through the Plan development process, common goals emerged. Local Byway Corridor Management Plans, regional agencies like the Columbia River Gorge Commission, FHWA, the Governor's Climate Challenge, State Transportation Policy Goals, and State Tourism Commission's Strategic Plan all establish specific measures in pursuit of shared goals for Scenic and Recreational Highways including:

- Stewardship – protecting, preserving, enhancing resources
- Tourism – increasing and enhancing public access to scenic and recreational resources
- Traveler Services – increasing and enhancing traveler safety and experience
- Planning and Integration – developing and implementing management plans through coordination with other agencies and organizations.

Perhaps most importantly, these existing goals are also consistent with the Transportation Policy Goals established by State Legislature (RCW 47.04.280).

How do these goals relate to the five State Transportation Policy Goals?

Each of the three primary elements identified for the Scenic and Recreational Highway System helps to support the State Transportation Policy Goals, particularly in the areas of safety, mobility and environment. (See the 5 State Transportation Policy Goals on Page 5 of this Plan).

State Safety Policy Goal: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.

- **Traveler Services** – increasing and enhancing traveler safety and experience

State Environmental Policy Goal: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment; and

- **Stewardship** – protecting, preserving, enhancing resources
- **Planning and Integration** – developing and implementing management plans through coordination with other agencies and organizations.

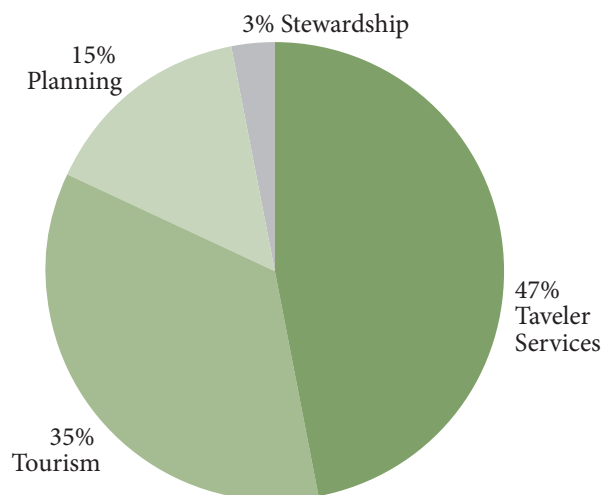
State Mobility Policy Goal: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State;

- **Tourism** – increasing and enhancing public access to scenic and recreational resources

Establishing a Balanced Approach

A balanced approach is needed to preserve and enhance resources associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways that support the State Transportation Policy Goals. The pie chart below shows the project spending from 1992 to the present. Over this time, there has been approximately \$25 million, \$9 million in state funding, primarily for traveler services like signage and rest areas, and \$15 million in federal funding dedicated to projects on the Scenic and Recreational Highways that address the goals outlined in this Plan. The majority of the federal funding has been dedicated to tourism and traveler services. Approximately 15% has funded Corridor Management Plans and site plans, while only 3% has been dedicated to stewardship efforts.

Project Funding History from 1992 to Present



Note: This figure includes approximately \$9 million in state gas tax funding to improve safety and traveler services like signage and rest areas as well as \$15 million in federal funding primarily dedicated to tourism and marketing, planning, and stewardship.



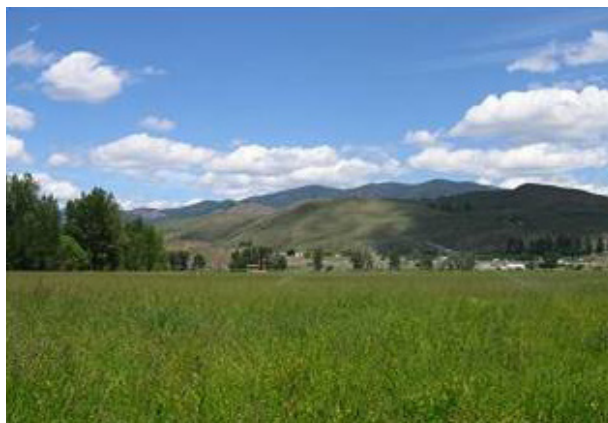
State Transportation Safety Goal: To provide for and improve the safety and security of transportation customers and the transportation system.

Scenic and Recreational Highways Safety Goal:	<i>Increase traveler safety through traveler services on Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways.</i>
WSDOT Implementation Steps:	I. Scenic and recreational highways will be included in all WSDOT transportation plans, corridor studies; from the project level to the programmatic level.
	II. WSDOT will partner to include tourism and travelers services in transportation improvement projects.
	III. WSDOT will refine our scoping processes to include routine inclusion of Scenic and Recreational Highways.
Performance Measures or Outcomes:	Reduce known collision risk locations/factors on Scenic and Recreational Highways.
	Increase and improve consistency of traveler information signs and Heritage Markers at priority locations.
	Increase visitor centers and rest areas at priority locations (every 60 miles) on scenic and recreational highways.
	Increase viewpoints, pull outs, and other traveler services on scenic and recreational highways.



State Transportation Environment Goal: To enhance Washington's quality of life through transportation investments that promote energy conservation, enhance healthy communities, and protect the environment.

Scenic and Recreational Highways Environment Goal:	<i>Plan for, protect, preserve, and enhance resources associated with the State's Scenic and Recreational Highways.</i>
WSDOT Implementation Steps:	<p>I. During the public comment periods, WSDOT will review and provide comment when needed on land use decisions and environmental considerations related to Scenic and Recreational Highways.</p> <p>II. WSDOT will partner to protect, preserve, and enhance resources associated with scenic and recreational highways.</p> <p>III. WSDOT will increase technical assistance services and support for developing and integrating corridor plans associated with scenic and recreational highways</p>
Performance Measures or Outcomes:	<p>Increase coordinated conservation efforts along Scenic and Recreational Highways to protect working farms, forests, conservation lands, and open space.</p> <p>Increase corridor management plans recognized through other planning processes at the local, tribal, regional, and/or state level.</p> <p>Increase coordinated water quality improvement efforts, habitat restoration, or other environmental mitigation efforts in the vicinity of Scenic and Recreational Highways.</p>



State Transportation Mobility Goal: To improve the predictable movement of goods and people throughout Washington State.

Scenic and Recreational Highways Mobility Goal:	<i>Increase public access to scenic and recreational resources associated with Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highways.</i>
WSDOT Implementation Steps:	<p>I. During the public comment periods, WSDOT will review and provide comment when needed on land use decisions and environmental considerations associated with scenic and recreational highways.</p> <p>II. WSDOT will pursue partnerships for enhancing access to recreational areas associated with scenic and recreational highways.</p> <p>III. WSDOT will work with Tribes to improve access to and share the histories of scenic, recreational, cultural, historic, and other important tribal resources.</p> <p>IV. WSDOT and other state agency plans, policies, and standards will recognize bicycling and walking as viable modes of transportation and as being supportive of sustainability, tourism and economic development in Washington.</p> <p>V. WSDOT will increase technical assistance and support for tourism and economic vitality initiatives consistent with Federal Highway Administration's principles of livable communities.</p>
Performance Measures or Outcomes:	<p>Increase access and information related to tribal, local, regional, state and national resources adjacent to Scenic and Recreational Highways in a way that is compatible with the features of the site.</p> <p>Increase corridor management plans and priority projects recognized through other planning processes at the local, tribal, regional, and/or state level.</p> <p>Increase and improve access to multi-use trails associated with scenic and recreational highways.</p> <p>Increase coordinated economic vitality and tourism initiatives associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways.</p>



Measuring Progress Toward the Environmental Goal

The goals of preserving and enhancing scenic and recreational resources through increasing planning and integration, traveler services/tourism, and stewardship was articulated by the Steering Committee for this Plan and also through public comments received during plan development.

Reliable existing data is currently available to support the performance measures associated with the Safety and Mobility Goals established through this Plan. However, in order to measure progress toward meeting the Environmental Goal: “Plan for, protect, preserve, and enhance resources associated with the State’s Scenic and Recreational Highways”, WSDOT identified additional data needs and contracted with the University of Washington to compile the data. University of Washington conducted an independent study collecting the best available data from other state agencies, counties and other sources to create a “Resource Planning Index” or a benchmark for preservation and sustainability throughout the Scenic and Recreational Highway System. This data was peer reviewed and evaluated by other state agencies before being published.

Building on the existing maps of most scenic areas identified through the visual assessments of the past, the Resource Planning Index compiles data associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways and has established a benchmark for tracking future performance that can be built on over time as new data is developed and acquired. See the **Appendix A, Figure 3** of this Plan for a map of most scenic sections of state highway as identified in past studies conducted by WSDOT.

The data compiled and mapped collectively as part of the Resource Planning Index includes:

- Natural Area Preserves
- Natural Resource Conservation Areas
- Parks
- Reserves
- Forests
- Historic locations
- Major destinations
- Water bodies
- Natural Heritage Areas
- Current and future land use

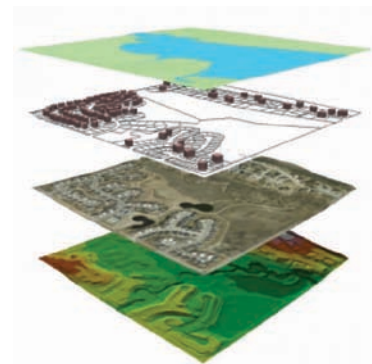
Additionally, some opportunities for protection and preservation considered in the proposed Resource Planning Index include:

- Locations where important wildlife corridors cross
Scenic and Recreational Highways may provide opportunities for habitat preservation or (in the case of major highways) bridges for wildlife passage.
- Private land in proximity to existing protected land provides opportunity to expand that protected area through the purchase of land or conservation easements.
- Locations where highway culverts block fish passage are opportunities for culvert removal/redesign and streambed restoration.
- Water bodies, streams, and wetlands in close proximity to highways provide opportunities for runoff management and stream flow restoration.
- Locations within existing protected lands provide opportunities for enhancing the viability of those areas as functioning ecosystems (e.g., through addressing fish passage issues)
- Locations in proximity to cultural, historic and other sites of importance provide opportunities to mitigate the impacts of highway traffic on those sites.

Locations considered to be of high scenic value based on past WSDOT studies and locations that have considerable opportunity for stewardship were identified as “hot spots” for resource preservation and protection potential. See the **Appendix A, Figures 3, 4 and 5** of this Plan for Locations of High Scenic Value and Resource Planning Index Maps.

A more detailed discussion of the University of Washington’s methodology for calculating the Resource Planning Index values at locations along Scenic and Recreational Highways is described in the separate report titled *Resource Planning Index Report by University of Washington produced by University of Washington*¹, available on WSDOT’s website and through the Washington State Transportation Research Center.

¹ All Background Papers, related Appendices, and supporting documents referenced in the Plan can be found at WSDOT’s website: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/LocalPrograms/ScenicByways/BywaysPlan.htm>



SECTION IV. IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

How will the state meet the goals of this Plan?

In order to implement the Scenic and Recreational Highways Plan, local governments, tribes, regional and state agencies will have to take coordinated implementation steps. Increased support and awareness will be necessary to meet the goals of this Plan and ensure the most spectacular and diverse landscapes remain intact for generations to come. The following section discusses some specific objectives and performance measures to help move toward the goals of this Plan.

Commitment to the Plan

WSDOT's commitment and focus

WSDOT is committed to a transparent program that balances all the elements of the Scenic and Recreational Highways including tourism/traveler services, planning and integration, and stewardship of the resources associated with these sections of state highway. WSDOT will continue to improve assistance to the public, private, and non-profit groups (i.e., byway groups, local business community, interested citizens) and look for opportunities to link them with other resources. WSDOT will support formal and informal connection between corridor management planning and other planning processes and continue to strengthen partnerships to meet state and federal requirements.

Need better integration of Corridor Management Plans within other planning processes

As part of the development of this Plan, WSDOT conducted a review to determine if corridor management plans developed for portions of Scenic and Recreational Highways were being integrated into other transportation and land use planning processes.

There are 24 corridor management plans, representing an investment of over \$3 million in federal and state funding, completed for approximately 2,900 miles of Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highway System

to date. These plans contain data, goals, and priorities that were developed by interest groups and partner agencies and organizations.

This important information has, in most cases, not made its way into comprehensive plans or regional transportation plans. Formally and informally connecting these planning processes would not only be an efficiency, but also create new opportunities and resources for increasing access to, protecting, and preserving resources associated with the Scenic and Recreational Highways.

Conclusions

Washington residents and visitors value scenic and recreational resources

The Plan development process confirmed that residents and visitors value our scenic and recreational resources and want to preserve them for generations to come. The Plan establishes goals and performance measures to help develop partnerships necessary to preserve and enhance the state's most spectacular and diverse landscapes associated with the State's Scenic and Recreational Highways.

A balanced approach is needed to preserve and enhance resources associated with Scenic and Recreational Highways

The primary elements for the Scenic and Recreational Highway System that also support the State Transportation Policy Goals include:

- Stewardship – protecting, preserving, enhancing resources
- Tourism – increasing and enhancing public access to scenic and recreational resources
- Traveler Services – increasing and enhancing traveler safety and experience
- Planning and Integration – developing and implementing management plans through coordination with other agencies and organizations.

Performance measurement is a vital step

Regular monitoring and evaluation of these performance measures helps ensure that Scenic and Recreational Highways are better integrated into daily state agency operations, planning, and project development. Benchmarking and performance measures also help document improvements throughout the state, providing data that can be used to describe progress toward the goals to the legislature and the general public.

Need better integration of Corridor Management Plans

There are 24 corridor management plans, representing an investment of over \$3 million in federal and state funding, completed for approximately 2,900 miles of Washington's Scenic and Recreational Highway System to date. These plans contain data, goals, and priorities that were developed by interest groups, tribes, or government agencies.

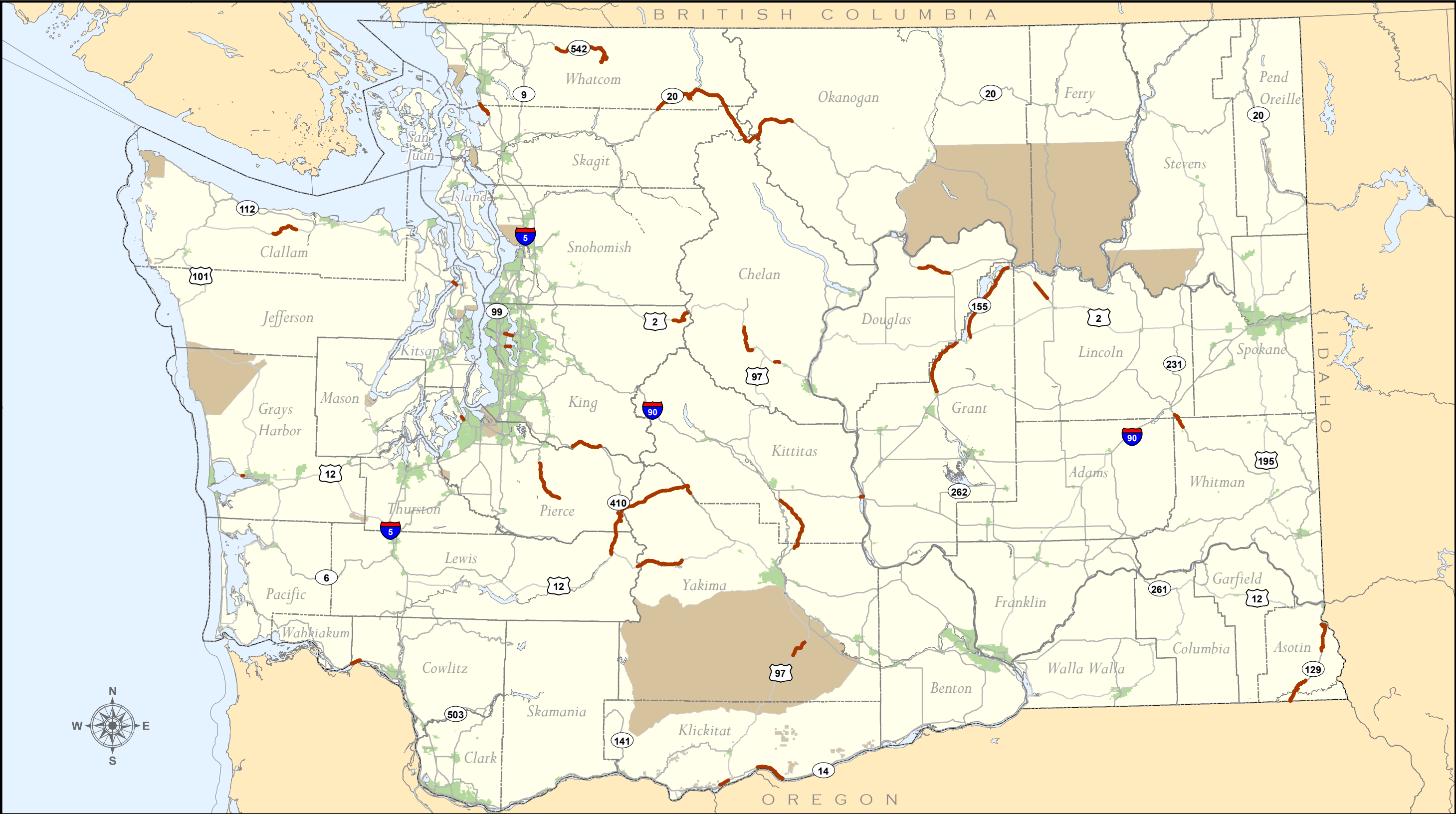
This important information has, in most cases, not made its way into comprehensive plans or regional transportation plans. Formally and informally connecting these planning processes would not only be an efficiency, but also create new opportunities and resources for increasing access to, protecting, and preserving resources associated with the Scenic and Recreational Highways.



APPENDIX A: LOCATIONS OF HIGHEST SCENIC VALUE AND HIGHEST POTENTIAL FOR PRESERVING AND PROTECTING RESOURCES – BENCHMARKS



Figure 3. Locations of Highest Scenic Value



0 15 30 60 Miles



Washington State
Department of Transportation



Tribal Lands*



City Limits



Locations of Highest Scenic Value

Locations of Highest Scenic Value

As Identified through studies conducted by
WSDOT between 1960 and 1990

* Tribal lands data source: Census 2000, Federally Recognized
American Indian Reservations and Trust Lands.

Figure 4. Resource Planning Index Values for Scenic and Recreational Highways

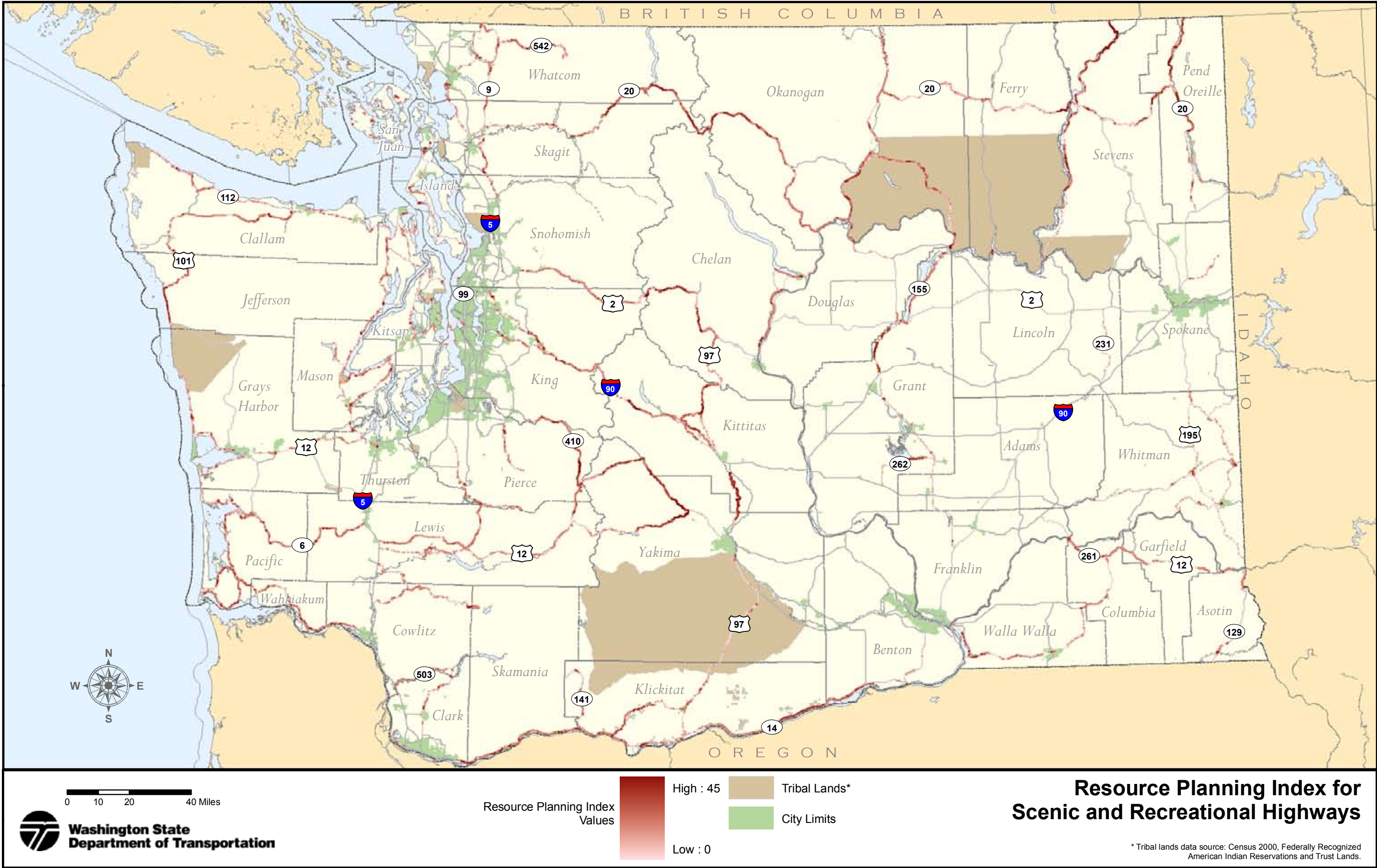
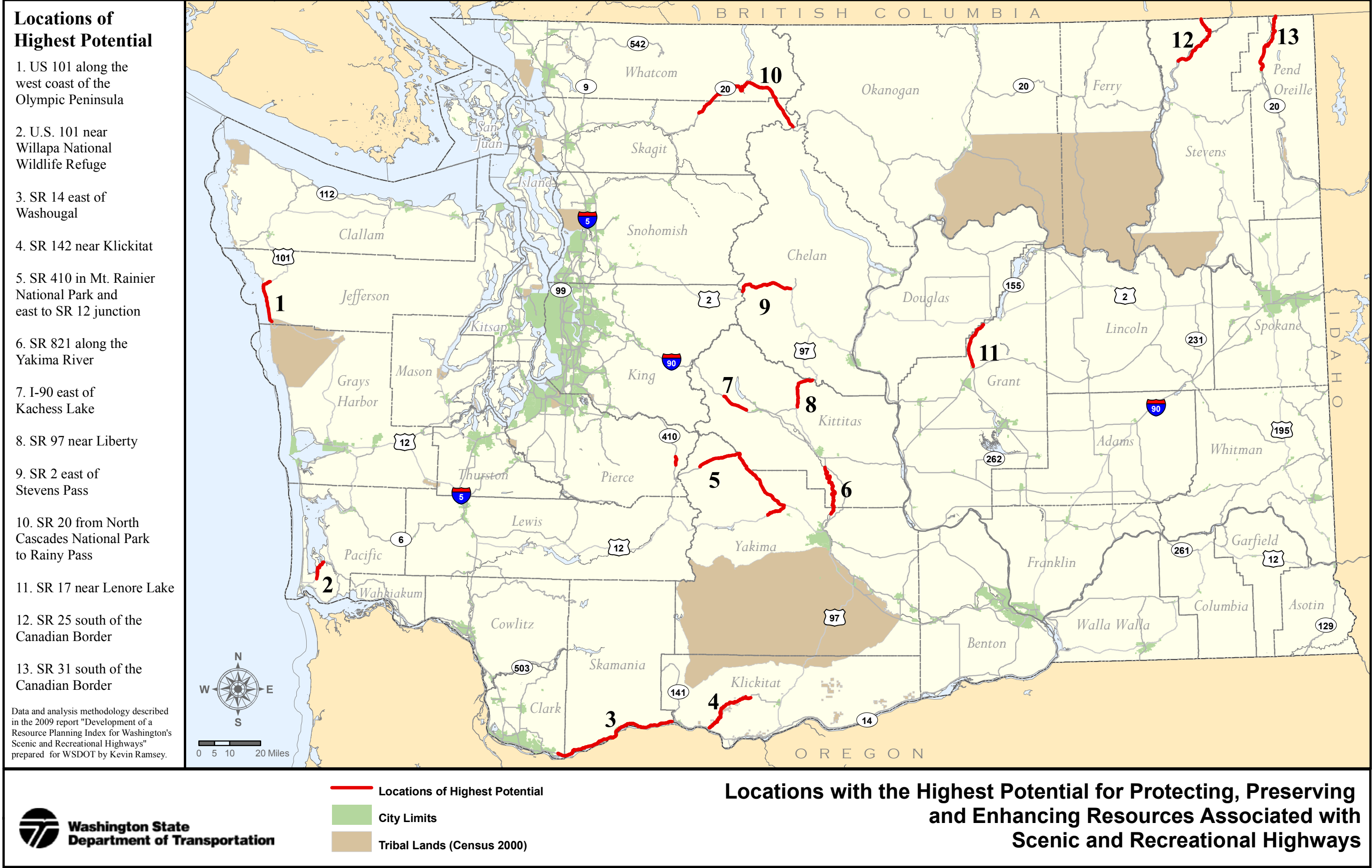


Figure 5. Locations of Highest Potential for Protecting, Preserving and Enhancing Resources Associated with Washington Scenic and Recreational Highways



APPENDIX B: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

All- American Road – Roads determined by Federal Highway Administration to be the most scenic of the roads designated as National Scenic Byways primarily for recognition and marketing purposes. This designation means these roads have features that do not exist elsewhere in the United States and are scenic enough to be destinations unto themselves. There are 27 All-American Roads located in 44 states. Washington State has one National Scenic Byway designated as an All-American Road, Chinook Scenic Byway.

Corridor Management Plans – Federal Highway Administration defines corridor management plans funded through their National Scenic Byway discretionary grant program as written documents that specify the actions, procedures, controls, operational practices, and strategies to maintain the qualities that support a byway's designation.

Federal Land Management Agency Byway – Federal Land Management Agency Byways are roads or highways under the jurisdiction of the Federal Land Management Agency that are designated by the Federal Land Management Agency through legislation or some other official declaration for unique qualities. In Washington State, these are part of the Scenic and Recreational Highways and/or part of the Scenic System (RCW 47.39 or 47.42).

Indian Tribe Scenic Byways – Indian Tribe Scenic Byways are roads or highways under the jurisdiction of the Tribe that are designated by the Tribe through legislation or some other official declaration for unique qualities. An official declaration is an action taken by that of an individual, board, committee, or political subdivision acting with granted authority on behalf of the Indian tribe. Indian Tribe Scenic Byway refers not only to the road or highway itself but also to the corridor through which it passes. Designation of a road or highway as an Indian Tribe Scenic Byway makes that road or highway eligible to apply for National Scenic Byway discretionary grants through Federal Highway

Administration. The Makah Tribe have designated the only Indian Tribe Scenic Byway in Washington, Cape Flattery Tribal Byway.

National Scenic Byways – Roads determined by Federal Highway Administration to be significant for archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational, and/or scenic qualities. National Scenic Byways must go through a nomination procedure required by Federal Highway Administration, and must already be designated as a state scenic byway or highway (Washington State law calls these “Scenic and Recreational Highways”) or Indian Tribe Scenic Byway in order to be nominated. However, roads that meet all criteria and requirements for National designation but not State or designation criteria may be considered for national designation on a case-by-case basis. Washington State has five National Scenic Byways not otherwise designated as All-American Roads.

National Scenic Byway Discretionary Grant Program – The program was established by US Congress in 1991 to preserve and protect the nation's scenic but often less-traveled roads and promote tourism and economic development. The program is administered by the Federal Highway Administration.

Program – A program typically focuses on specific outcomes and performance measures, provides project funding, and will have a clearly defined prioritization, and project selection process. It is also possible for a program to implement objectives from multiple strategic plans. Existing programs may have preexisting guidance either in state law or at the federal level. These programs cannot be modified beyond the flexibility given in the law.

Plan - Plans establish guiding principles (goals, objectives, and measures) and programs implement these guiding principles. A plan can and often does establish guiding principles for a number of programs.

Performance Measures – Performance measures establish the parameters within which programs, investments, and acquisitions are reaching the desired results. This process of measuring performance often requires the use of statistical evidence to determine progress toward specific defined organizational objectives. Fundamental purpose behind performance measures is to improve performance.

Scenic and Recreational Highways – Scenic and Recreational Highways are sections of Washington State Highway that are identified in State law (RCW 47.39 and 47.42) and designated because of a need to develop management plans that will protect and preserve the scenic and recreational resources from loss through inappropriate development. Protection of scenic and recreational resources includes managing land use outside normal highway rights-of-way. The [State] legislature recognizes that scenic and recreational highways are typically located in areas that are natural in character, along watercourses or through mountainous areas, or in areas with a view of such scenery (RCW 47.39.020). Designation as a Scenic and Recreational Highway or Indian Tribe Scenic Byway is required in order to apply for National Scenic Byway discretionary grants.

State Scenic Byway – State Scenic Byway is a term used in US Code Title 23, Sec. 162 – National Scenic Byway Program, to refer generally to sections of state highway designated by states (Washington state law refers to these as Scenic and Recreational Highways (RCW 47.39). The term State Scenic Byway has also been used in the past to refer to a subset of the Scenic and Recreational Highways (RCW 47.39 & RCW 47.42) and other highways and roads primarily for marketing purposes. However, there is no legal definition of these routes.

Traveler Services – Traveler services is a term used in this Plan to refer to features like rest areas, pull outs, view points, signs that help to improve traveler safety and experience.

Tourism – In this Plan, tourism is used to refer to projects that increase and enhance public access to scenic and recreational resources like maps, signs, informational kiosks.

Stewardship – In this Plan, stewardship means protecting and preserving resources associated with the Scenic and Recreational Highways like natural areas, cultural sites, and historic monuments.





Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Information

Persons with disabilities may request this information be prepared and supplied in alternate formats by calling the Washington State Department of Transportation ADA Accommodation Hotline collect 206-389-2839. Persons with hearing impairments may access Washington State Telecommunications Relay Service (TTY) at 1-800-833-6388, or Tele-Braille at 1-800-833-6385, or Voice at 1-800-833-6384, and ask to be connected to 360-705-7097.

Title VI Notice to Public

It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For Title VI complaint forms and advice, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7098 or (509) 324-6018.



**Washington State
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